

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY WARNS OF NAVY'S PROPOSED USE OF ILLEGAL PESTICIDE NEAR  
WILDLIFE REFUGE**

***Wildlife Resources Commission Notifies Congress of Dangers***

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley today sent a letter to state environment, public health, business and agricultural leaders and organizations warning of the danger posed by an illegal pesticide that the U.S. Navy proposes for control of birds at the Pocosin Lake National Wildlife Refuge near where the Navy wants to build an outlying landing field. The text of Gov. Easley's letter follows.

"Today I received a letter the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission sent to our members of Congress. It expresses grave concerns over the U.S. Navy's proposed use of a highly toxic pesticide to control the delicate waterfowl near the Beaufort-Washington county line where the Navy plans an outlying landing field (OLF). I want to make sure you are aware of this threat to our state's fragile and priceless natural heritage. As you may be aware, the Navy is starting a series of public hearings next week on this matter across Eastern North Carolina.

"In its draft environmental impact statement concerning locating the outlying landing field near the Pocosin Lake National Wildlife Refuge and Lake Mattamuskeet, the Navy says it plans to use the pesticide Avitrol, among other things, to control the bird population in the area. North Carolina's laws ban the use of this chemical for such purposes. 'Under no circumstances should this chemical be used in proximity to tundra swans, snow geese or any other migratory waterfowl,' said Wes Seegars, chairman of the state Wildlife Resources Commission, in his letter to our congressional delegation.

"This deadly chemical, which is mixed with the birds' food, causes them to give out distress calls, flap about, fly in erratic patterns and die. Humans who come in contact with the chemical or in contact with birds who have ingested it can become seriously ill with nausea, dizziness, excessive perspiration, difficulty breathing and tremors.

"It is important to note that this cannot be characterized as a local issue, the harm will not be limited to the area surrounding the OLF. Because these migratory populations come from as far away as Alaska and western Canada, wide swaths of North America will be affected. In particular, many of these birds also winter in the areas surrounding the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware.

"The Navy is considering one of the most important waterfowl reserves in North America and the Atlantic Flyway for the OLF. Hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, many of them endangered species,

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